



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of: )  
)  
J. Donald HILL et al. ) Examiner: To Be Assigned  
)  
Serial No.: 09/987,976 ) Group Art Unit: 3738  
)  
Filed: November 16, 2001 )  
)  
For: AUTOMATIC SUTURE FIXATION )  
APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR )  
MINIMALLY INVASIVE CARDIAC )  
SURGERY )

RESPONSE TO NOTICE TO FILE MISSING  
PARTS AND SUBMISSION OF FORMAL DRAWINGS

Commissioner for Patents  
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

RESPONSE TO NOTICE TO FILE MISSING PARTS

In response to the attached Notice to File Missing Parts of Non-Provisional Application (NTFMP) mailed November 29, 2001, by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO), Applicants are enclosing payment of the small entity late filing surcharge fee. Applicants also are enclosing an executed declaration and an executed power of attorney for each of the named inventors. Applicants are entitled to and do hereby claim **small entity status**. Applicants are enclosing a check in the amount of \$65 covering the requisite late filing surcharge fee.

SUBMISSION OF FORMAL DRAWINGS

Applicants further are submitting formal drawings of originally filed **Figs. 1-11** in the above-captioned patent application. Applicants maintain that the enclosed formal drawings satisfy the margin requirements as set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 1.84. Therefore, Applicants believe that Applicants' submission of the enclosed formal drawings overcomes the objection to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.84, as set forth in the attached Notice to File Missing Parts.

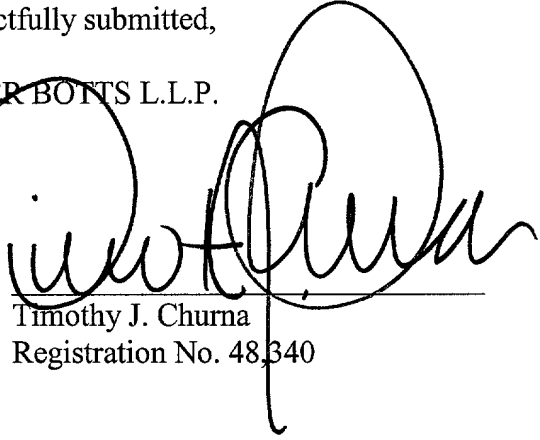
CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance, and such disposition is earnestly submitted. In the event of any variance between the fees determined by Applicants and those determined by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, please charge or credit any such variance to the undersigned's Deposit Account No. 02-0375.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosures